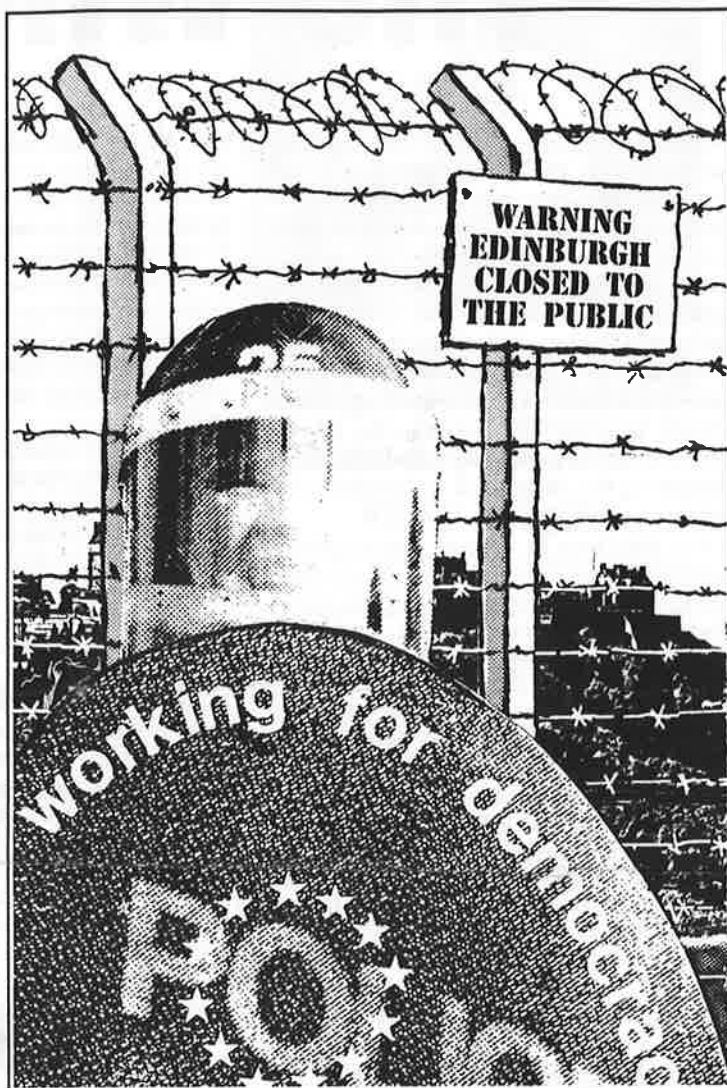


The Glasgow Keelie

Number 16

WHO RULES?

STUFF THE SUMMIT - 12 Dec



As the protests against the disasters of privatisation grow, we must attack the real reasons concerning why it occurs. To do this we must ask what is the real relationship between the government and the state? Who controls the UK? Does Parliament really represent the people and offer us the power to decide who runs our lives?

The state - meaning the top companies, land owners and Aristocracy - are clearly outwith government control: their powers were not voted for, and remain deliberately unchallenged by the parliamentary system. Indeed the government works for the state, is funded by them and they eventually

join the gang. Is it any surprise that so many ex-Cabinet Ministers move on to key positions in the state? Like Norman Tebbit on BT, like George Younger on The Royal Bank of Scotland, like Jim Prior on GEC (Scotland's top arms company) and like the very minister who privatised gas in the first place, Peter Walker, now running British Gas. This is their reward for using Parliament to hold back and ignore the massive opposition of the people, and put the wealth of the country into private hands. Our reward is to fund it all.

Secret

The state is not a mysterious entity with divine rights; they certainly operate in secret, but this is to hide the levels of corruption. Look at that 'pillar of the state' the Bank of

England. They knew the facts on BCCI for four years, yet they let the gun-running, arms dealing, money laundering and embezzlement run on unchecked. Now with the aid of MI5 they can hide and destroy the evidence, all in the name of 'state security'. The same story occurs with UK industries profiting out of the Gulf war. We should pull them out of their secret chambers.

The deals which have been done, on all the privatisations, can be undone and broken on the streets, but we will be continually fighting the 'symptoms' of a diseased political system unless we organise and demonstrate to undo the biggest dirty deal of all, that between the government and the state.

The white death on

Do you know that asbestos is one of the deadliest substances in the world and has killed thousands upon thousands of people? Do you also know it is used in hundreds of every-day products in your home and the very cement which holds your house together? That it is shed from millions of brake-pads in cars every day and is the material which insulates and fire-proofs pipes, boilers and the basic services and appliances in every public building; offices, schools, hospitals? It is even in the talc on condoms and surgeons' gloves and is the main element in the chalk used by teachers and children in school.

You don't have to work in asbestos related industries to catch asbestos related diseases. Examples of tradesmen, housewives and a Glasgow school-teacher who died from mesothelioma caught at work, provide testimony of this. That's why Glasgow City Chambers, Regional Council buildings all over Scotland, The Scottish Office in Edinburgh and the Houses of Parliament in Westminster have all in turn been closed down to strip out asbestos. At great financial cost, the Scottish and U.K. Governments have demonstrated their knowledge and fear of the dangers of asbestos, yet they continue to deny recognition of victims of asbestos diseases. Indeed, controlled by the British State which exists in the interests of the very national and multinational companies which promote asbestos products, the British Government have used every agency to hide the horror story of asbestos. They concede that asbestos poisoning is a 'prescribed industrial disease' which entitles sufferers to all the designated benefits and compensations, but deliberately block every access open to claimants.

In the Glasgow area, since 1945, 20,000 men in the shipyards alone have officially caught asbestos diseases. The real figures are much higher due to the refusal by GPs to diagnose and the DSS to accept diagnosis of asbestosis in claims for benefit. Because the cases are tried under Civil Law, the burden of proof is on the victim who must provide personal proof that they caught asbestos disease from asbestos exposure. What kind of behaviour is this from the very bodies set up to help the sick and disabled? Are they playing down Glasgow's reputation of being the sick City of Europe or is there some more sinister reason for denying that in the 'Workers' City' of Glasgow, former workshop of the world, industrial disease is the most common form of illness?

Since the last century, the effects of asbestos poisoning have been known. Acting on years of reports from factories, in 1908 a British Parliamentary Commission officially recognised deaths caused by asbestos. In 1929 the U.S. asbestos corporation, Johns Manville, admitted knowledge of asbestos disease by making out-of-court settlements with affected employees. In Australia immigrants were fraudulently enticed to work in asbestos mines that no Australian would because the death rate was common knowledge.

Why then if employers and Governments knew

asbestos could kill, was it continued to be used and how did they get away with such criminal behaviour for over a hundred years? Even Hitler banned asbestos in fascist slave-camps because the death rate was too high. Why are war criminals hunted to the furthest corners of the world while industrial criminals go scot-free? How should we remember the names of Clydeside industrial barons like Fairfields, John Browns and Yarrow who knowingly exposed their workers to asbestos poisoning?

It is no surprise that Glasgow should be the HQ of 'Clydeside Action on Asbestos', set up and run by victims of the asbestos industry for mutual support and counsel. As victims flooded their office, knowledge of the 'dirtiest and far reaching conspiracy against workers and their families began to unfold'. Linked by a century of systematic connivance, the Government, the DSS, employers, Trade Unions, insurance companies, doctors and lawyers formed a chain of denial. Unlike all other terminal illnesses, sufferers of asbestos diseases, 80% of which are lung cancers and 10% mesothelioma, are denied research, diagnosis and hospice facilities. This means there is no hope of proper treatment, recovery or care with victims left to die often without even knowing what they are dying of. Nor is there access to any form of justice.

Compensation for criminal injuries is more readily given than for industrial injuries yet, the asbestos industry is guilty of provable criminal negligence. There might be a case for criminal injuries compensation as well as industrial injuries. The asbestos story of conspiracy and denial, simply put, is 'murder'. In attempts to delay the inevitability of justice, Governments and employers seem to think they can buy time as easily as they pay off the legal and medical professions. Not so, as Johns Mansville discovered in 1981 when punitive damages of \$759,000 were awarded on top of ordinary damages of \$1,250,000. Also, an Australian Court in 1988 awarded a mesothelioma victim \$250,000 on top of \$426,000. Punitive damages are awarded 'when a company has acted in an utterly outrageous manner'. A mortal blow to the asbestos industry further endorsed in the USA by the 'Baltimore judgement' in 1992 which ruled a consolidated award of punitive damages for 8,555 claims with a further 86,000 pending. It doesn't take an accountant to work out the cost of this Court Ruling.

The crucial factor is not just the money awarded, but that it was an 'in-court ruling', a legal precedent based on the liable negligence of employers. When Judges in Britain start to rule in favour of punitive damages, (known as exemplary damages in the U.K.), the asbestos industry will be brought to account for its murderous disregard. Criminal prosecution can then be pursued against employers and authorities; maybe to the level of corporate manslaughter or worse, and insurance companies will refuse to pay out due to the unlawful behaviour of policy-holders.

In this knowledge and backed by 'Clydeside



Action on Asbestos', Pat McCrystal, a victim of mesothelioma with only months to live, took his case to the Court of Session in Edinburgh. He engaged a lawyer from the firm Robin Thomson, who was funded by his Trade Union, the GMB. With justice for all victims in mind, he rejected 'out of court settlements' which increased from £18,000 to £50,000, insisting that the Court decides his case with a Judge's ruling. Under intense pressure from his lawyer Nicola Dandridge and his QC Graham Fleming, he was urged to accept the money. Mr McCrystal resisted all coercion to accept the £50,000, of which the GMB got 10%, explaining that he wanted justice, not money. He knew that such a 'legal precedent' ruled in court would benefit every victim's case thereafter in terms of justice and level of compensation. On the advice of his legal boss, The Dean of Faculty, and knowing that no case can be heard in the Court of Session without a QC, the QC threatened to withdraw if the money wasn't accepted. The lawyer

n the Clyde



used every dupe at her disposal to persuade Mr McCrystal to take the money. She even sold the 'out of court settlement' as an 'in court ruling' in that the firm, Fairfield's Shipbuilders, had accepted liability.

By admitting liability out of court, they avoided the 'in court ruling' and danger of 'exemplary (punitive) damages' being awarded. But, if Mr McCrystal continued to insist on going to court, which he did, this admission of liability becomes something else. They had confessed to being guilty of gross negligence by knowingly and wilfully exposing employees to asbestos poisoning. Guilt by 'acts or omissions of the employer' could be proved and criminal prosecution could follow. Recognising this dilemma the lawyer then hit the bottom line saying that the GMB might withdraw support and that a new QC would be extremely difficult to get as the Court of Session is a closed shop. Mr McCrystal was then rudely informed that even if

he could get another QC, a new case would take a year to prepare and he would be dead before that. Under Scottish Law his claim would die with him. He had no option but to accept. The Scottish legal system scaled new heights of injustice in their panic to stop Pat McCrystal's case getting to court. If they think that such blackmail has welded the last link in the chain of denial of justice for asbestos victims, they should reconsider. This issue represents probably the most important fight that working folk will ever experience. Not only does it question current power relationships in industry and Government, it could prove their retrospective guilt right back to the last century. This is no difficult-to-grasp political philosophy with its positions of right and left, it is a straight forward legal question which will eventually be resolved. All it requires is one straight lawyer, doctor and QC to take up the case. Even if it takes a major public campaign to shame them into the open, they will be found. Not found wanting like Scotland's MPs and their lack of commitment to bring Scottish Law in line with England.

They will be forced to do so and the legal pistol which was held at Pat McCrystal's head will be nautered.

No more cases either like the untimely death of Peter Boyle who died after he was forced to struggle up the steps to the top of the City Halls in Glasgow for an asbestos victims' meeting. Scottish Law and callous disregard by all the authorities involved, robbed his family of justice four days before his case was to be heard at the Court of Session.

During a public protest at Mr Boyle's death, the Lord Provost of Glasgow signed 'The Asbestos Charter' calling for justice for victims and a global ban. This should lead to signatures from the whole Council and from all other authorities: political, medical and legal. In view of the immoral attitude of the legal structure in Scotland, will the leader of the Council, Jean McFadden, drop the dishonest high-brow principles of her first class law degree to sign the 'Charter'? A look at the health history of any Glasgow family will show unexplained respiratory illnesses and cancers which are in fact asbestos related. Especially lung-cancer, industrial asthma, chronic bronchitis and 'chronic obstruction of the airways disease' (COAD). Are you familiar with these medical terms? Don't be bought off or kidded any longer, join 'Clydeside Action On Asbestos' and sign the Charter. Let us get together to bring those responsible to justice and get proper care and compensation for their victims.

And always remember: Justice delayed is justice denied.

*For further information on how you can help the campaign, visit:
Clydeside Action on Asbestos,
15 St. Margaret's Place (Saltmarket)
Tel: 552 88525*



Does anyone here know Kelly?

Me the Lord Provost? From Baillie to big boss, isn't local politics fun.

What a surprise and that's hard to disguise, chosen, and me on the run.

Won't be found short, truth I'll abort, my gravy train stands at the station.

Hop on and I'm off, aren't I just the toff long last at my destination.

You know some aren't happy and get rather snappy when I show them by P.R. design.

But why are they shouting and claim I am counting the profit all to be mine?

They say I'm a weasel who's run out of diesel and just about to be caught.

I try hard to stay tall and I'm not a greaseball just 'cause I can be bought.

Yes my name's Michael Kelly and that rhymes with smelly and I've always stood in a stink.

My legs turn to jelly and I go scared and skelly at the thought of the kitchen sink.

'cause wash off the grime and you'd uncover the slime that oozes from under my skin.

They say it for spite, I give good smell to a shite, a reptile up past my chin.

They claim I'm a faker, a political baker whose cake-mix is always going sour.

But I'm a mover, a maker, and not just a taker whose recipe is self-raising power.

I was the be-getter of Glasgow Smiles Better during yon cultural din.

I'm alive and kicking and I wasn't arse-licking when Edinburgh counted me in.

Now with Celtic of Glasgow they say I'm a snide crow; will the hatred come to an end?

Do they think I'm a slug, a deceitful humbug, just 'cause I don't have a friend?

Why call me a chancer, I'm not the only prancer who danced all over the grave

Of the workers' city, with no measure of pity for the industrial heritage brave.

I'm aware of our history and it comes as a mystery that anyone should kick up a fuss.

I'm all for tomorrow and I'll beg, steal or borrow; I'd even drink buckets of pus.

Just like Pat Lally I'll always be pally with the men that pay for your dinner.

Just as Machiavelli rhymes nicely with Kelly there's a rhythm 'tween winner and sinner.

Herald of Free Enterprise

You have to wonder just what the hell is going on with Glasgow's newspapers. The *Evening Times* recently ran an editorial demanding that we all let the CBI run the campaign against Water Privatisation. Reading the *Herald* report on the various massacres in South Africa you get the feeling that its been dictated by the South African Secret Service. Nothing new here perhaps, considering Outram, who print both papers, was owned by the London Rhodesia Company (Lonrho). But we were told back in May when Outram bought out Lonrho that greater independence had been gained. Hearty congratulations were offered by 'many leading members of the Scottish Business and Industrial circles', who were looking forward to 'working more closely' with the new company. Although the *Evening Times* told us that the new company was Outram, it turns out that they are owned by Caledonian Newspapers (they should have known really considering that their Editor is on the Board).

Caledonian got the money for the buy-out deal from the bank Robert Fleming & Co., of the £85.5m they pay back £5.5m every year on the interest alone. Flemings will be particularly happy that the 'greater independence' in the *Herald* has seen the paper almost completely given over to praising Venture Capital and their Enterprise Companies. They have high stakes in Enterprise Zones. Six members of Flemings are also on the board of Jardine Fleming, who are the insurance brokers of the London Docklands Development Corporation, and Flemings are also major shareholders in Stanhope Properties, who are in turn major shareholders in Olympia & York, who own Canary Wharf. Almost all of Fleming's directors have their money tied up in that cheerful democratic enterprise zone, Hong Kong. Particularly Henry Keswick who runs Hong Kong Land and Jardine Matheson (that company and Hong Kong go back a long way, to

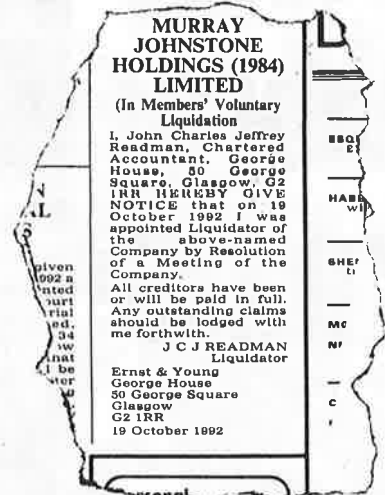
1832 in fact, when it was started by the opium trader William Jardine, whose family Keswick married into). Keswick is also on the board of the Daily Telegraph, where he sits beside even richer global manipulators (Keswick is the 57th richest man in the UK), these include Sir Evelyn Rothschild (who runs De Beers Consolidated Mines in South Africa, who control all the diamonds in the world), Sir Martin Jacobson (Bank of England and Barclay's Bank, (Rupert Hambros (Anglo American Corporation of South Africa and Hambros Bank) and Conrad Black (a member of the top elite think tanks, the Trilateral Commission and the Bilderburg groups). Both Black and Keswick are on the board of Hollinger Inc. who, as well as owning the *Telegraph*, also own the *Spectator*, the *Sunday Telegraph* and curiously both the *Jerusalem* and the *Palestine Post* (aye, you've got to be fair to both sides). All that lot of course are notorious for running far-right and secret service propaganda, including the rantings of neo-nazi David Irving. And indeed the *Herald* has been having a wee go at this itself with Patrick Laurence and Paul Wilkinson (whose lunatic Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism is a well-know Secret Service pipeline).

The way Flemings tend to perform a take-over, is to first get their man on the board of a prospective company. Step forward Ian Macpherson, the most recent appointee to Caledonian. Macpherson is the chairman of Watson & Philip who are financially advised by Flemings. Indeed Macpherson seems to have connections to one of the other banks who put up the money. He used to work for the British Linen Bank which is the merchant bank of the Bank of Scotland who put £35m of the whole deal along with the Royal Bank of Scotland. They in turn, through their merchant bank Charterhouse already were financially advising Lonrho and funnily enough Rupert Murdoch's Newsgroup

Company (who, in the final twist, were shareholders and advisers to Charterhouse, it seems they are all giving each other advice - some people would call that conspiracy).

One more twist, then you can go back to reading your nice independent *Herald*. David Montgomery, who used to edit the *News of the World* and sat on Murdoch's Newsgroup company, has recently joined the board of the *Mirror*, whose staff promptly went on strike, largely because he's so right-wing. Where did Montgomery work before he joined the *Mirror*, yes, he was on the board of Caledonian Newspapers. The *Mirror* staff have learned a few things about the business activities of rich proprietors.

Curse of the Keelie



Mr 'Glasgow Cultural Enterprise', Ray Johnstone, will have some explaining to do, as to why Murray Johnstone (who handle £438m of Strathclyde Regional Council's pension fund) has run out of money. Have they for instance, like Ray's other company Scottish Amicable (who handle £313m of the fund) and two other advisors M&G and Mercury (who between them handle nearly £500m) been involved in 'private placements' on the scandal ridden Vancouver Stock Exchange. The VSE was described by an Observer exposé as the 'scam capital of the world' and 'the biggest standing joke in North America'. Its victims have been pension funds and unit trusts, with most of their money ending up in the hands of 'two Panamanian companies, owners and purposes unknown'.

That Murray Johnstone went bust should be a clear indication for SRC workers as to their untrustworthiness. You see the only laws governing a pension fund manager is - in the words of Professor Ross Harper - that they should "apply the same care and attention to the trust that they would to their own affairs". Good job Ray has been influential friends in the media (who owe him money) like Ian Mcpherson, who used to be a director of the British Stock Exchange and no stranger to financial 'discrepancies' himself.



John McCabe/Impact Visuals

As the economy slides, the ranks of the poor and homeless swell. Prisoners bury the indigent in mass graves in Potter's Field, New York City.